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Letter dated 26 August 2005 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement concerning disengagement issued on 25 August 2005 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Emyr **Jones Parry**
Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 26 August 2005 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English, French and Spanish]

Statement concerning disengagement issued on 25 August 2005 by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the historic progress made on Israel's withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the northern West Bank. It commends the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority for their commitment to overcome the difficult challenges they face.

The European Union pays tribute to the courage of Prime Minister Sharon and the Israeli Government for implementing the disengagement plan, and to the Israeli security forces for their conduct. It also recognizes the commitment of the Palestinian Authority in assisting a peaceful withdrawal. It applauds the close coordination between the two sides and encourages them to continue on this path. It welcomes, and urges the continuation of, the restraint shown by the majority of Israelis and Palestinians.

The European Union believes that disengagement should be a significant step towards implementing the Quartet Road Map. It encourages both parties to continue their cooperation on the remaining steps to complete disengagement, including their close work with the Quartet Special Envoy for Disengagement, James Wolfensohn, on the key areas that he has identified.

The European Union reiterates its undertaking to assist both sides in advancing the peace process and achieving the goal of coexistence of the two States through the creation of a viable Palestinian State, living side by side with Israel in peace and security, in the framework of a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the conflict.

The acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Croatia* and Turkey, the countries of the stabilization and association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area, as well as the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, align themselves with this statement.

* Croatia continues to be part of the stabilization and association process.